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CORPORATE AMERICA DECIDES TO PAUSE POLITICAL DONATIONS

US business houses are rethinking political contributions in the wake of the Capitol siege by Trump supporters last week

GOLDMAN, JP MORGAN, CITI HALT CONTRIBUTIONS

Goldman Sachs has announced freezing of donations through its political action committee (PAC). JPMorgan, the largest US bank by assets, will halt donations for six months, while Citigroup will put all contributions on hold for a quarter. Meanwhile, some firms like Marriott are pausing donations to Republicans who sought to overturn the election results

POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEES VS E-BONDS

- Blue Cross Blue Shield, Boston Scientific and Commerce Bancshares are taking a targeted approach to donation freezes
- In the US, companies contribute to political parties or candidates through PACs which make the details public. In India, companies can anonymously pay political parties through electoral bonds

$14 bn

ESTIMATED MONEY SPENT DURING THE 2020 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

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All degree, PG, engineering classes to open from January 15

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

DOORS will be thrown open for students of all years of undergraduate, postgraduate, engineering and diploma students to physically return to classes (offline classes) on January 15, Deputy Chief Minister and Higher Education Minister Dr CN Ashwath Narayan announced on Monday.

Colleges will have Covid testing and sanitisation facilities and follow social distancing norms, he said.

The decision has been taken after observing the successful running of final-year degree classes amidst the ongoing Covid pandemic. The state government had earlier said that a decision would be taken on reopening institutions for all degree and higher classes after observing the conduct of classes for final-year degree students that started on November 17. Later, classes 10 and 12 too were reopened, besides classes under the Vidyagama scheme for Classes 6 to 9 from January 1.

The decision was taken at a high-level meeting of department officials chaired by Dr Ashwath Narayan on Monday.

All hostels and and bus facilities too will be resumed to facilitate convenient transport of students to and from institutions. Arrangements have been made to distribute bus passes to students at the earliest, and the transport department has agreed to it.

Dr Ashwath Narayan requested colleges to approach the road transport department offices in their vicinity to expedite the process of availing bus passes for the students.

CONTINUED ON: P7

SC set to issue orders today on setting up a court-monitored committee to address the farmer agitation; raps Centre for sloppy talks, prods it to put contentious legislations on ice for now

Stay on farm law implementation?

Farmers during their ongoing agitation over the farm reform laws, at the Singhu border in Delhi on Monday | PTI

NOT EVEN ONE PLEA IN SC SAYING LAWS ARE GOOD, FINDS BENCH

Observing that there is not a single petition before the Supreme Court saying the farm laws were beneficial, the bench told the Centre, "It will not help you to say that this was started by the last government. We are discussing constitutionality."

KANU SARDA @ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court on Monday indicated that it could stay the implementation of the three contentious farm laws as it came down heavily on the government for insisting on continuing with the laws despite the nearly two-month-long farmers' protest in and around Delhi's borders.

A bench headed by Chief Justice of India S A Bobde told Attorney General K K Venugopal and Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that the government had failed to hold effective negotiations with the protesting farmers, and stressed the need for a court-appointed committee to break the logjam. The bench will pass its order on Tuesday.

The court blamed the government for framing the laws without enough consultation. "We do not want to repeat the criticism but we do not believe your negotiations are effective. We are attempting to make the atmosphere conducive by keeping the implementation of the laws in abeyance," the CJI observed while referring to the suicides by farmers to say that it did not want any blood on its hands, and also voiced concern about the possibility of the protests turning violent.

"Who is going to take responsibility for bloodshed if this sabre-rattling goes on and results in conflagration?" the bench questioned.

Sense of responsibility

"We don't see why there is an insistence on implementation of the laws. It's our intention to see if we can bring about an amicable resolution. That is why we asked why don't you put the bills on hold. You want time for negotiation. If there is some sense of responsibility then you will not implement the laws," the bench said

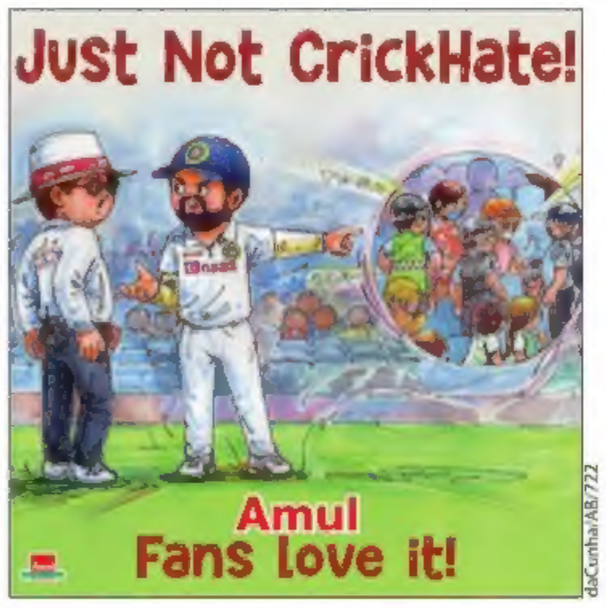
When Venugopal claimed that the laws were based on the recommendations of various expert committees set up by past governments, including those of the UPA, the CJI cut him short. "It will not help to say that some other government started it. We are not on the merits of the laws," CJI Bobde said.

To Venugopal's complaint that the farmers were being stubborn on their demand to repeal the laws, the CJI said they will be heard by the proposed court-appointed committee.

Referring to the bench's suggestion to stay the legislations, Venugopal requested it not to take such a drastic decision and to wait for some more time before passing orders. But the CJI was in no mood to relent. "Sorry to say, we have to, because you, as the Union of India, did not take responsibility. You were not able to solve the problem. You should have been able to solve the strike, but you did not," CJI Bobde said.

Mehta sought to defend the government when the CJI asked him if the Centre was part of the problem or the solution. The Solicitor General said many organisations had come forward to support the laws as progressive.

The bench also made it clear that the protesting farmers would have to move to another site to continue their agitation. P9



CHINA MOVES TROOPS DEPLOYED IN REAR

EXPRESS NEW SERVICE @ New Delhi

CHINA recently moved around 10,000 People's Liberation Army (PLA) personnel deployed deep inside the Line of Actual Control (LAC) on their side, further away from the border. But there was no change in its deployment of troops and equipment on the Ladakh border, where they ingressed into Indian territory several months ago.

Confirming the development, a senior Army officer said, "There is no change in the troop positions from the Chinese side." The deployment of equipment and systems, including the artillery, armoured vehicles and missile regiments in the stand-off mode, have also not changed. Though the purpose of the Chinese troop reorganisation was not immediately clear, there was speculation that it could be due to bad weather.

FLYING COLOURS

All-woman crew members of Air India's first non-stop flight from San Francisco that landed in Bengaluru early on Monday morning | ASHISHKRISHNA HP | P2

Shripad Naik meets with accident; wife, aide die

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Karwar

UNION Ayush Minister Shripad Naik's wife and his personal assistant died, while the minister himself was critically injured after their vehicle met with an accident at Hosakambi village of Ankola taluk near Karwar on Monday evening. Two others too were injured in the accident.

The police said that Naik, his wife Vijaya, his personal assistant and RSS pracharak Deepak Ramdas and two others were on their way to Gokarna after visiting the Gante Ganapathi temple in Yellapur when the driver lost control of the vehicle. The SUV fell into a valley and turned turtle.

Seriously injured Vijaya was rushed to a private hospital, where she died, while Deepak was admitted to the Government Hospital in Ankola, where he too breathed his last.

Shripad Naik, whose condition is said to be critical, has been shifted to Bambolin Hospital in Goa. Two more people who were in the vehicle are undergoing treatment at the Kumta Government Hospital.

The vehicle had six people, including the driver, Suraj Patil. Apart from the Minister, his wife and Deepak, there was Kiran Sethia and his gunman Tukaram Patil. Vijaya's body has been sent for postmortem, hospital authorities said. P7

Shripad Naik being shifted to hospital in Goa after the accident on Monday | EXPRESS

Team BSY: Munirathna, Shankar, MTB to make it

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @ Bengaluru

A day after the party central leadership greenlighted the induction of seven ministers into his cabinet, Chief Minister **BS Yediyurappa** and other senior leaders are working on striking a fine balance between newcomers and loyalists, and seeking to take other leaders into confidence.

While three newcomers -- N Munirathna, MTB Nagaraj and R Shankar – are set to make it to the ministry, names of senior leaders are being considered for the four other berths.

On Monday, Yediyurappa said the new ministers will take oath on January 13 or 14, and BJP National President JP Nadda and general secretary in-charge of Karnataka Arun Singh will be invited for the ceremony. Sources said it will most likely be held after 4pm on January 13, and they expect to get more clarity on the names on Tuesday.

It was, however, not clear if Yediyurappa will go in for cabinet expansion or reshuffle. "Let's see, you will get to know," he said.

Currently, the cabinet has 27 ministers, including the Chief Minister, and seven berths are vacant.

CONTINUED ON: P4

Centre to bear expense of vaccinating frontline group

Govt orders 5.1 cr doses

The Centre has ordered 4 cr doses of Covaxin from Bharat Biotech, costing ₹300 each, and 1.1 cr doses of Covishield, costing ₹210 each, from SII, sources said

16L to get jab in first phase

Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa on Monday said 16 lakh Corona warriors will be vaccinated in the state in the first phase, starting January 16. These include healthcare workers, employees of municipalities, rural development and police, among others P3

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE Centre will bear the full expense of vaccinating three crore healthcare and frontline workers in the first phase. This was confirmed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his videoconference call with chief ministers on Monday.

"Health workers, both government and private, will be vaccinated first. Sanitation workers, other frontline workers, defence forces, police and other paramilitary forces will also be vaccinated in the first phase," Modi said. Thereafter, those above 50 years and younger people with co-morbidities will be given the vaccine against Covid-19.

The PM also told the chief ministers that politicians including people's representatives should not try to get the vaccine in the first phase. He also asked states to ensure that no rumours are spread against vaccination. He said that apart from Covishield manufactured by Serum Institute and Bharat Biotech's Covaxin — four others are in the pipeline. "Our experts have taken all precautions to provide the countrymen with effective vaccines," he said.

The vaccine rollout will begin on January 16 with the help of 61,000 programme managers, 2 lakh vaccinators and 3.7 lakh other vaccination team members, the CMs were informed.

EXPRESS READ

Karnataka pitching for Tesla, says minister

Bengaluru: In a bid to boost investment in Karnataka and turn it into an EV powerhouse, the State Government has been holding talks with US electric vehicle manufacturer Tesla, for the past three months. "The government has been in talks with Tesla for investments for the past few months," said Industries Minister Jagadish Shettar, who is on a tour of North Karnataka. P4

ART OF SURVIVAL

Sydney thriller: Vihari, Ashwin defy pain, odds to draw applause

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN @ Chennai

IT was a day for new heroes. It was a day for unfairly maligned cricketers to remind India of the talent they possess. It was a day for putting bodies on the line to save careers. Weeks after being bundled out for their lowest score ever, they married heart, fight and spirit to outlast the Australian bowlers in a display of guts that will be recounted in history books that will chronicle the triumphs of Indian cricket. That too by a bunch that included players who wouldn't have figured in the XI if everyone was fit.

The scoreboard will say Hanuma Vihari remained unbeaten on 23. It will say R Ashwin made an undefeated 39. What it won't say is they battled their body, the Aussie bowlers and cheap shots from close-in fielders for over 40 overs to steer India to a draw when that possibility seemingly did not exist after they lost captain Ajinkya Rahane in the second over of the day. While Rishabh Pant and Cheteshwar Pujara played their part, the unbroken sixth-wicket stand between Ashwin and Vihari made the difference.

Hanuma Vihari and R Ashwin hug after the match in Sydney on Monday | AFP

On Twitter, Ashwin's wife, Prithi, posted "he could not stand up straight when he woke up this morning". So he opted to keep stretching in the dressing room, shadow practicing while Pujara and Pant shared a 148-run partnership. By the time he joined Vihari, the latter was limping. Retiring was not an option. So they started to block. They took blows, they flinched, they popped a pill, they opted for extra protective gear instead of walking away.

MORE REPORTS: 15